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VOL. 10 NO. 17
NOVEMBER 1980
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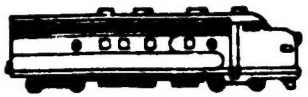
BACK ISSUES

The full year 1979 is now available--Volume 9, 15 issues of RTN all in one parcel for just $5.50 postpd, no tax. Also: 1978 $5.50; 1977 (22 issues) $7. RTN, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.



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LETTERS

Regarding "Sleepers on the DESERT WIND" (RTN 210), the Amtrak and Union Pacific personnel at the Ogden station seem to have a problem. My wife and I experienced similar problems: the Amtrak station personnel arrived at the last minute to open up, boarded most of the passengers, and then left us in darkness for 30 minutes. Fifteen minutes later the sleeping car porter arrived. There was confusion until we departed, 45 minutes late.

It was disappointing to find the interior of the converted sleeper in poor condition. Chair upholstery and floors were very dirty. A new train? First class? We couldn't believe it. This was only Sep 4--what a mess the interior would be after the snows came.

We spoke to Amtrak representatives in Los Angeles at the Family Day shortly thereafter. They stated that altho the sleeper had been electrified, the interior had not been refurbished, and that a refurbished sleeper, or Superliner sleeper was due shortly to take its place.

I realize how old some of the passenger cars are, but since when is that an excuse for not at least keeping it clean? The past four years I have taken about 12 first class accommodations, and the only clean ones were operating around Washington DC. How can we the consumers fight back effectively at the apathy and lethargy in the system? I have written, filled out forms, and even spoken to service reps at the Amtrak office in Washington. I am getting the feeling that "Atlas" shrugged.

Craig V. Ericsson
Ridgecrest, California

Because you have kept discussion of British Rail alive, let me add a few comments. We got 2504 miles out of a Britrailpass, 1645 of them new to me, and I do not care to think what those miles would have cost us if we had bought tickets--and this applies to either class. Tickets are very dear, as the British would say; the average fare is less because there are many "deals" but a railfan doesn't want to return exactly the same way to use most of them.

Second class looks very pretty in the pictures, but it seems only slightly less crowded than a British Airways 747. Britain's own comments suggest that some of the long distance ordinary cars are like a World War I troop train at Trenton. Fortunately, Britain sells railpasses in either class.

The dining cars are nice if you don't find a sign reading "Closed due to staff shortage." This happened to us more often than not. Anyway, they are extremely expensive. The buffet cars give a fair bargain. One can certainly afford to drink lager and ale even if one can't afford the food in the diners.

Britrail does run late; some of the track is not yet up to the speeds which the trains reach. Sundays (and sometimes Saturdays) bring a whole new schedule. England rolls up its rails for two days at Christmas, and Scotland rolls up its irons for two days at New Years. Startling, to find not a single train between Edinburgh and Glasgow, London and Scotland for an entire day. We entered Edinburgh Station on New Years Day, startled a charwoman, and caused a very helpful official to raise his eyebrows to the level of his cap. Unwittingly we had found a secret entrance to the chained and gated structure.

There is now a fat book for sale which lists all trains, even the museum operations; but there are also as many supplements as we used to see to passenger tariffs. Stations sell railfan books and magazines.

But I must say the Continent has better trains. Sorry about that.

William C. Kessel
Hamburg, New York

...There's a reference (in RTN 211) to EL COSTENO, the Ferrocarril del Pacifico's train no. 1, carrying one or two Pullmans. I am sure Mr. Lerrigo must have seen it before it was fully made up; I have ridden it at least a dozen times, and never seen less than 6 or 8 Pullman cars. Last autumn during the Mexicana airline strike, there were 15 or 16 out of Sufragio northbound (the connection with the Chihuahua al Pacifico). Northbound EL COSTENO is split at Benjamin Hill, Sonora, with the coche comedor and the salon cantina heading for Mexicali on the Sonora-Baja California.

A word of caution to prospective RTN Mexico travelers is this: The main line trains to Mexicali, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo and Ciudad Juarez all carry diners and usually club cars. There are other runs, however, where one Pullman is it. On the overnight run to Oaxaca or Uruapan this isn't so bad. However, 36 hours to Merida or Tapachula can be a pretty exhausting venture. (Merida's three daily narrow gauge passenger trains make it well worthwhile.)

The article also mentions the line to Manzanillo. There is a stretch of this run that I would match against any anywhere for spectacular mountain scenery as it winds down a river gorge in the state of Colima. However, the daily passenger train carries only 3rd- and 4th-class cars, and could be a bit of a shock for the uninitiated.

I have been told that the club car on EL TAPATIO is off the postwar 20th CENTURY LIMITED, but have never been able to verify it. Perhaps a more knowledgeable RTN reader can do so.

John V. Fels
Phoenix, Arizona

C&O steam locomotive 614 is everything that you say it is, and then some. Stack and whistle sounds are pure nostalgia. However, Chessie has the train restricted to 55mph for safety of passengers walking thru the train and between cars, as they put it. 614 puts on a fine show wherever there are some line gradients that make

ON THE COVER

Amtrak graphics for promotion of the newly-opened train station at the BWI (Baltimore-Washington International) Airport. The opening, which took place on Oct 23, was reported on in our last issue. As part of the promotion of the new stop, Amtrak is holding a contest with 200 prizes of various travel packages and tickets. Further information on it is found in the Mixed Train of Thoughts department in this issue.

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it work. However, on some of the long, flat stretches of line it just pokes along easy at 55mph, making little sound but the whistle. It's a big, burly race horse of an engine with not much to do most of the time, with that 16-19 car train. The 55mph limit will probably encourage many people to chase the train rather than ride it. Those who are interested in seeing 614 perform might write to Chessie in Baltimore and encourage them to run the train a little faster on those routes where the track is designed for it. It may get a little discouraging to see some freight trains running faster than the "Safety Express" in places such as B&O's Indiana main.

Robert T. Clark
Sanford, Florida

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

SEPTEMBER 1980 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE OVER 1979

Metroliners	128,140	-2.3
NE Corr Conventional	390,327	-6.0
New Haven-Springfld	19,196	-23.6
NY-Philadelphia	191,769	4.4
Phila-Harrisburg	76,449	-1.5
NY-Harrisburg	25,898	91.4
TOTAL NE CORRIDOR:	831,779	-1.7
NY-Niagara Falls	55,262	4.0
Chicago-St. Louis	6,531	-32.1
Chicago-Milwaukee	22,249	2.8
Chic.-Detroit/Toledo	34,149	1.1
Chicago-Carbondale	12,424	-8.3
Chicago-Quincy	7,721	-7.4
L.A.-San Diego	99,142	5.2
Vancouver-Eugene	15,676	-11.8
Washington-Cincinnati	10,891	71.9
Wash.-Martinsburg	22,008	0.5
Oakland-Bakersfield	9,958	16.3
New York-Montreal	6,850	-34.3
Chicago-Port Huron	7,512	-8.0
Chicago-Dubuque	2,665	-19.0
Chicago-Duluth	10,771	8.5
Chicago-Valparaiso	18,361	--
Chicago-Peoria	2,955	--
Chicago-Kansas City	10,185	53.4
Phila.-Pittsburgh	4,915	--
Portland-Eugene	4,294	--
TOTAL SHORT DIST.:	364,519	11.4

Washington-Montreal	33,802	15.2
New York-Florida	44,542	-8.2
Chicago-NY/Washington	22,370	24.5
Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	10,008	15.7
Chicago-Seattle	20,394	51.8
Chicago-S.F./L.A.*	37,405	77.6
Chicago-Los Angeles	22,297	3.1
Chicago-New Orleans	15,583	-2.8
Chicago-Texas	16,047	20.7
L.A.-New Orleans	6,047	-1.5
L.A.-Seattle	43,355	-2.3
Chicago-NY/Boston	27,159	20.1
Boston-Newport News	47,830	-5.3
New York-Savannah	33,153	-7.7
Seattle-Salt Lake	11,265	-3.5
New York-New Orleans	38,588	128.8
TOTAL LONG DIST.:	429,845	13.7
Special trains	1,200	-68.4
SYSTEM TOTAL:	1,627,343	-0.1

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR plus DESERT WIND

The above ridership figures, for September, were released by Amtrak in mid-November. Patronage was an insignificant one tenth of one percent less than that of Sep 1979. If one allows for the routes that were discontinued in Oct 1979, total Amtrak ridership was actually up 4.6%. The month of September concludes the fiscal year 1980, and during that year ridership "came close to matching the all-time record ridership year Amtrak achieved during fiscal year 1979 when escalating nationwide fuel costs and spot shortages contributed to increased train ridership." For the fiscal year, total ridership was down .9%, but with the discontinued routes taken into account there was an increase of 3.4%.

Amtrak continues to show the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and DESERT WIND figures combined. A footnote gives the DESERT WIND figures separately: 11,280. Therefore, the

SFZ ridership would be 26,125 for a 24.0% increase over Sep 1979's 21,060. No percentage change figures are given for those trains that were started up within the last twelve months. The single most heavily patronized train continued to be the COAST STARLIGHT, with 43,355 riders in September.

AMTRAK HAS BIGGEST THANKSGIVING YET; CHICAGO TRAINS NOW ALL ELECTRIFIED

Amtrak patronage over the 4-day Thanksgiving weekend--Nov 27-30--was "probably the heaviest in Amtrak history", a spokesman for the rail corporation said. Amtrak said it was using all its equipment and all it could "beg, borrow, or steal", and still there were not enough seats to handle all the passengers who showed up in the Northeast Corridor. In Chicago, there were an estimated 30,000 Amtrak patrons on Sunday the 30th, compared to about 10,000 passengers on an average day at Chicago Union Station. (In our Cars & Consists department, on page 21, are given the consists of many of the trains that departed Chicago on the day before Thanksgiving.) The day preceding Thanksgiving and the Sunday following are traditionally two of the most heavily-concentrated rail travel days in the year.

All of the trains running out of Chicago are now using electric head-end power, as of Dec 1. The last steam-heated train to depart Chicago was train 347, the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, on Nov 30. The consist of that train was recorded as follows: SDP40F engines 513 & 518; Hi-level coaches 9914, 9947, 9950, 9941, 9949, Hi-level diner 9984, Hi-level lounge 9974, Hi-level diner 9983 as coach, Hi-level coaches 9955 & 9935, lounges 3353 & 3334 as coaches, Hi-level coaches 9901 & 9900. (Exact car order may have differed from this listing.) On the same date the last steam-heated long-distance train to leave Chicago operated; that was train 3, the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, and its consist was: SDP40F engines numbers unknown; cars 1110 and 1219 baggage, Hi-level baggage-dorm 9990, sleeper 2256 "Star View", sleeper 2753 "Palm Leaf", sleeper 2558 "Rock Creek", diner 8092, Hi-level coach 9927, Hi-level lounge 9975, Hi-level coaches 9945, 9952, and 9943. (The last steam-heated SOUTHWEST LIMITED was to leave Los Angeles on Dec 3.)

Amtrak said that the use of electric head-end powered equipment had helped it achieve a high on-time departure record from Chicago; the November record was above 95%. Amtrak said this was an all-time high record for Chicago.

RAIL CANADA

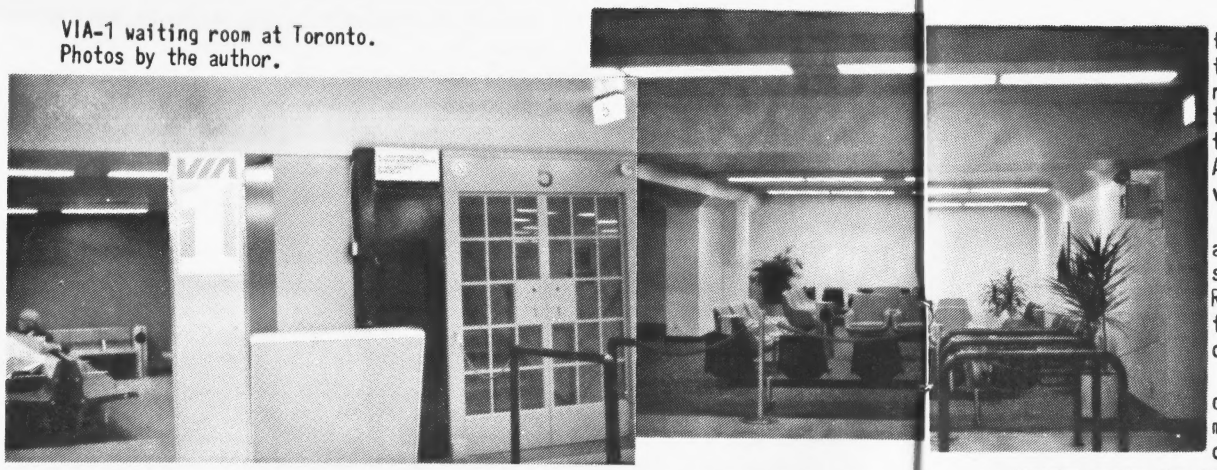
FIRST-HAND REPORT ON THE VIA-1 SERVICE

by Tom Higgins

VIA Rail Canada's new VIA-1 first class service program was reported on in RTN 212. I tried the service, which began Oct 20, and it is number 1 with me.

I picked up my ticket at the special gate and went directly to train 62, the RAPIDO. (This is great because you get topside at Toronto Union Station to take pictures.) There is a special waiting room for VIA-1 passengers (see accompanying photos). My coat was taken and hung up by the porter, and I was offered tea or coffee several times during the trip from Toronto to Montreal. Newspapers and magazines, in two languages, were in plentiful supply, and for a Saturday in November the car was three-quarters full, as was the Club 52 car. A special silver menu was presented to each passenger, and a choice of eating at 12 noon or 1:15 was offered. The menu read as follows: "Appetizer; Green Pepper Steak, Duchesse potatoes, baby carrots; or Coq au Vin, Parisienne potatoes, baby carrots; Dessert, Cheese tray; Coffee-Tea available at all times. Complimentary glass of red or white wine is served with your meal..." A longer wine list is also available.

VIA-1 waiting room at Toronto.
Photos by the author.



I had a free glass of "house" wine, and a cheese tray was passed around after lunch.

The On-Board Service Manager, Mr. R. Jackson, introduced himself and provided me with his job description. Among his duties en route, the Manager must introduce himself or herself to first class passengers, and also circulate thru the coaches and introduce himself and solicit club sales and advertise the upgraded services by word of mouth; he must ensure that service standards are adhered to, resolve any complaints and problems, and maintain liaison with train crews in order to handle passenger problems concerning disuprtions and connections. He is required to evaluate employee performance, examine and comment on work systems and procedures; ensure that defects are reported; make sure that aisle strips are not put down too soon or exits not closed too soon. Among his duties on the ground are to be sure that equipment is spotted and opened on time for boarding, and to remain on the platform until everyone has detrained and exited to the station.

★ ★ ★

ONTARIO TASK FORCE on Provincial Rail Policy, chaired by Mrs. Margaret Scrivener, published its Interim Report in mid-November. Its Final Report is due out early in 1981. The fifth volume of the 5-volume report, "The Future Role of Rail --A Policy Position", summarizes the philosophical position of the Task Force. The fifth volume states that "In view of Ontario's extensive involvement in railways, its vital interest in an efficient transportation system and the rapidly changing circumstances affecting that system, it seems logical that a study of the railways' role originate at the Provincial level." It points out that railways are a major source of employment that affect our environment, and are potentially one of the most fuel-efficient means of transport available thruout the Province. The questions of rail passenger service, commuter service, and electrification of railways are taken up, in addition to studies of freight operations and other topics. We plan to publish more on this study in future issues of RTN. The report is available for purchase from the Ontario Government Book Store, 880 Bay St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 1Z8.

TORONTO UNION STATION was evacuated on Nov 18 when ammonia gas used for refrigeration began leaking from a tank in a sub-basement.

FEDERAL TRANSPORT MINISTRY report issued in late November, prepared by the Canadian Institute of Guided Ground Transport at Queen's University, Kingston, recommended either a 125mph electric or diesel or a 160mph dedicated-track electric rail route for passenger trains between Toronto and Montreal be built within the next five years.

A THRU TRAIN between the Maritimes and Ontario, eliminating the need to change trains in Montreal as has been the case in the past, will be operated by VIA on Dec 20, 22, 26 & 28, running from Halifax thru Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton Jct to Toronto and vice versa. After leaving McAdam, N.B., the trains' next scheduled passenger stop is Kingston, Ontario. Allan Raftus, VP - VIA Atlantic, announced the new holiday service on Nov 7.

IMPROVEMENTS TO RAILINER servicing facilities in Campbellton are to be made, with VIA spending $50,000 to build an equipment storage building, a new platform and increased lighting. The RDC cars between Campbellton and Moncton were replaced with refurbished units last Sep 29. The facilities are scheduled for completion early in 1981.

"CANADIAN BUSINESS" MAGAZINE (Nov issue) carries an article on VIA Rail. It notes that the corporation "has managed to make rail passenger travel look increasingly like a going concern."

BETWEEN GASPE AND MONTREAL during the Christmas and New Year's periods, VIA will run direct conventional trains without the necessity of transferring at Matapedia. From Montreal to Gaspe, train #16 will run on Dec 19, 21, 23, 27, 29, 30, and Jan 3 & 4, leaving Montreal Central Station at 10pm and arriving at Gaspe at 4:20pm next day. The other direction, train #17 will run on the same date plus Jan 5, leaving Gaspe at 1:20pm and reaching Montreal at 7:35am. Trains will include 3 sleepers and a Dayniter car.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

THE RUMOR REPORTED here last issue that New Jersey might buy some GE E60 locomotives from Amtrak to replace its 12 GG-1s is untrue, says reader Jerome Rosenfeld. New York & Long Branch service will be supplemented by 100% Silverliner MU trains to and from South Amboy and New York. There are plans to build a new South Amboy station with high-level platforms to permit across-platform transfers from diesel train from Bay Head onto a Silverliner train.

NEW JERSEY TRANSIT has, for unknown reasons, constructed a new station about 400 feet north off Montclair Branch in Montclair, about four blocks east of the present station. It is near no mass transit and can handle only about three 85-foot cars.

MTA HUDSON & HARLEM lines are to get 10 Budd SPV-2000 cars in 1981 to replace old RDC's. The New Hamburg NY station on the Hudson Line may be restored as a regular stop in 1981.

SOUTH SHORE OFFICIALS were at Croton and Stamford in late November, looking over the New Haven 4400 cars for possible use on their line. The cars seemed to meet their specifications. Four of these "Washboard" MU cars are now in service on the Harlem & Hudson Line, and a total of 40 of them are being reactivated by next year because of frequent breakdowns of the MTA M-1 cars.

SEATTLE VOTERS APPROVED in November a measure to increase the city's sales tax to finance improvements to the transit system. More diesel bus routes will be converted to trolley bus.

BOSTON'S TRANSIT SYSTEM ran out of money on Nov 17, and on Dec 3 the state Senate finally passed an emergency bill okaying $41 million to keep the MBTA running. The issue of where the money would come from was still unresolved. When the system went bankrupt, the Governor officially took it over, declaring a state of emergency. Service is expected to remain at normal levels thru the year-end.

SAN FRANCISCO MUNI wants to buy from Boeing-Vertol 15 streetcars that were refused by Boston's MBTA but which have since been modified. The Federal government

will be asked for $17.2 million to purchase the cars which, at $766,000 each, are considered a bargain. Some of the money would be used for modifying existing cars to allow one operator to run two or more cars in a train.

THE "EL CAMINO", the domed commuter train equipment purchased for Southern California thru the efforts of L.A. Supervisor Baxter Ward, has been saved for the county by shrewd political maneuvering by Ward, who arranged that Caltrans lease the equipment for three years. Ward and Caltrans hope to use it for an Oxnard-L.A. commuter run. Ward was defeated in the Nov election, and his successor had pledged to sell off the rail equipment.

RIDING THE AMTRAK LRC
by Alan Crossley

LRC--light, rapid, comfortable, according to its manufacturer. To which one could easily add "unassuming". I got the impression that were it not for the jangle of the crossing signals--and some pronounced flange squeal on the curved rails at New London's Union Station--train 151 this Veterans' Day might have slipped in and out unnoticed. The LRC has none of thd towering bulk of the usual F40 engine; from front to back the train is scarcely taller than a United Aircraft TurboTrain between the domes, lacking even the humpback roofline of the Rohr power cars. Also missing is the F40's furious racket. Yet the compact Canadian packs much of the muscle of the big EMDs (2700hp vs. 3000), and easily tops an E8 (2250 hp). It simply does so without bragging.

Seeing the train's fresh new face--its protruding nose and upturned black-framed windshield giving it the look of an earnest raccoon--and realizing that it was completed only this spring, make it easy to forget that the prototype LRC locomotive was first built eight years ago and tested on the Corridor as far back as Mar 1977. At that time it was thought that Amtrak's PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL would see the new equipment, but after extensive Shore Line testing this summer, Amtrak's first trainset was put in service there, initially on trains 153 and 154 (the Boston-New Haven BEACON HILL), and now on 151 and 152 (the Boston-New York SHORELINER).

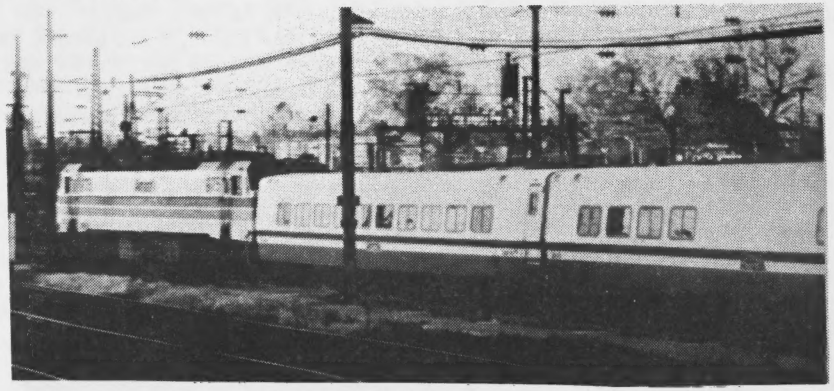
Unable until the Nov 11 holiday to ride the new 151, I was now eager to do so, if only to New Haven. Running this morning behind LRC locomotive 38 were coach 46, cafe-club 45, and coaches 42 and 44. The passenger load was light. Altho eight minutes late, we still had an hour to cover the 51 miles and three stops to New Haven, a fairly safe bet.

As far as I know, Amtrak has not promoted the train at all. Perhaps this is because it has not yet proven itself, or maybe Amtrak feels that many passengers won't notice anything radically different from the regular Corridor fare. Indeed, stepping aboard the LRC is not exactly like discovering a new world. There are enough familiar appointments to maintain a better-than-passing resemblance to Amfleet, among them the seats (in the new subdued colors), the indirect lighting, the tracked reading lights in the baggage rack, and the outward-jutting cafe counter. The cafe car, in fact, follows the same coach-cafe-club layout as its Amfleet predecessors. No club service is offered on the SHORELINER, so for the moment the club seats are freebies.

Yet if the Amfleet influence is more than evident, there are differences as well. Most notable, and positive, are the larger--and for now cleaner--windows, which extend lower than Budd's and improve the view considerably. They are double-paned with the proper arrangement of glass outside and Lexan inside, but with an airspace of about two inches between the panes. The illuminated information signs--lavatory occupancy, no smoking, and exit--are stacked on the lavatory bulkheads, closer to eye level and much larger than Amfleet's. The no-smoking sign uses the international circular symbol rather than words. There is one lavatory at each end of the cars.

Each car has just one vestibule, and there is a hump in the floor formed by small ramps where the diaphragms meet. I assume these are transition ramps to mate with a slightly higher Amfleet floor level when the equipment is mixed (which it often has been lately). In any case, a "watch your step" sign might be appropriate on the sliding, electrically operated double doors.

Cosmetics aside, how does the LRC perform? Steadily, smoothly, tracking beautifully thru curves--very well indeed. Walking about the train seemed easy, tho it's only fair to note that much of the Shore Line is in excellent shape, the Northeast Corridor project having begun, finally, to amount to something besides padded schedules. I felt the ride was a touch or two softer than Amfleet's, and



Amtrak train 151, consisting of E60 #975 and four LRC cars--shown are coach 46 and cafe/club car 45--leaves New Haven CT on Nov 11.

my return trip that afternoon on the bulbous Budds seemed to bear this out. In retrospect I'm sorry we had a pure LRC consist that morning, as an Amfleet car on the train would have made comparing them easier. I also realize there's a tendency to overrate something simply because it is still tight and new--the same hardly applies to Amfleet anymore--but I was impressed nonetheless.

Braking, which produced a slight rumbling noise, was otherwise smooth and sure. Acceleration was adequate, if not brisk, but perhaps with the easy schedule there was no need for fast takeoffs.

As it was, we gained steadily on the timecard, and past Old Saybrook, where the line becomes merely serpentine instead of corkscrew, we hit and even topped 80 on several stretches. Coming into Madison, we were only four minutes down; however, the engineer, who apparently was having hand signals from back in the train relayed to him by the fireman, missed trying to line up his conductor's open door with the small wooden crosswalk connecting our track to the platform. About a minute was consumed backing up 25 feet and letting the three passengers on. Still, there was time aplenty, and we arrived in New Haven two minutes early.

Like anything else, the ORC is not perfect. The air circulation system was too noisy, sounding rather like someone running a vacuum cleaner on the roof, and negating the otherwise effective sound insulation. I also noted that one door control panel was marked "out of order." Overall, tho, this short ride on good track left quite a positive impression.

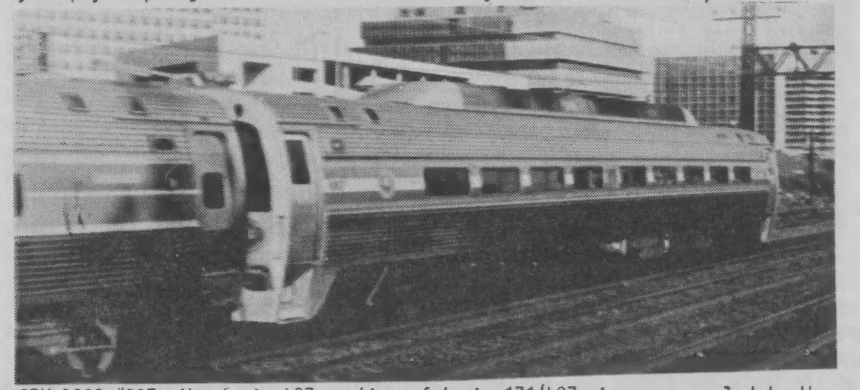
It will be interesting to see how Amtrak uses its new LRCs. Significantly, and unlike Amtrak's other lightweight trainsets, the Turboliners, the equipment is neither dedicated to a single consist nor incompatible with the bulk of Amtrak's roster. Thus the operating department is not stuck with a short consist when

demand peaks, nor forced to run empty cars all over the place when they're not needed. Nor must they scrub the whole trainset when only part of it needs shopping, since it will readily run with Amfleet (or, presumably, Heritage cars).

The day after my trip, for example, train 152 carried an Amcafe on the rear in place of its LRC counterpart, and that Friday train 151 was using an F40, three LRC coaches and three Amfleet. I've even seen the LRC locomotive by itself in charge of five Amcoaches. I hope, of course, that these consists are the result of experimentation and not equipment failures.

Back at New Haven, the engine change had been completed, E60CH #975 having drawn the task of completing #151's run to New York. The train suddenly looked more diminutive than ever next to the big electric locomotive, and the low-slung, close-coupled cars seemed huddled behind it as they were led away to the big city. But if the sight was oddly amusing, it was further evidence of adaptability from the new kid on the Corridor, and of added flexibility in Amtrak's fleet.

Altho I was on my way to Stamford (via New Haven Line local), I had planned to stop over in New Haven to watch part of another interesting and new Corridor operation, the extension of Inland Route SPV-2000 runs to New York and Philadelphia. Here again, Amtrak is taking advantage of the flexibility of some new equipment, by simply coupling the SPVs to the rear of regular Corridor trains, much as Budd had intended with its Amfleet-compatible design. At the moment there are two such runs daily in each direction: 171/407 and 176/420 (to and from New York), and 193/419 and 190/406 (to and from Philadelphia).



SPV-2000 #997, the train 407 portion of train 171/407, is seen coupled to the rear of the Amfleet consist at Stamford CT on Nov 11. Photos by the author.

Train 190/406, due in at 9:12, was reported ten minutes late this morning, a forecast which proved only slightly optimistic. At 9:24, E60 #959 pounded in with a typical complement of baggage car and seven Amcoaches, plus a rather untypical tail car, SPV-2000 #998. Many a casual observer might have noticed nothing unusual, and indeed the car had become just another coach while in the train, wired up to the head-end power, its engines turned off. Its rearward-facing cab windows even suggested, appropriately enough, a squared-off Amfleet observation, altho this--with due respect to a distinguished carbuilding tradition--was probably not something Budd intended.

Thus, as the power was being changed up front, a second ground crew readied train 406 for its solo break, unhooking the jumper cables and starting the motors. Its train crew aboard, the 998 left soon after a slightly shortened 190 cleared the station.

Just how much, if anything, Amtrak saves with this operation is unclear, but perhaps the convenience for the thru passenger will help build ridership for Connecticut's vigorously expanded Inland Route service. It does show a willingness to experiment, however, and that at least is encouraging.

SUPERLINERS TO THE SNOW

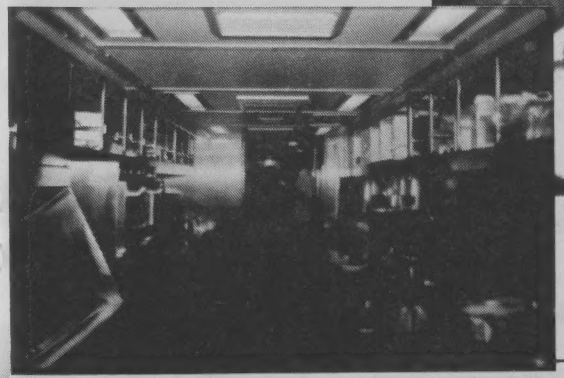
by James Russell

The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR has taken on a new elegance with the coming of the Superliner cars. This I learned first hand on an October weekend when I had my first opportunity to ride a fully-equipped Superliner train. After suffering from old, breakdown-prone cars for years, the ZEPHYR is now all new and bright and shiny and the crew seems inspired by the change as well.

Quite a few people were boarding this murkily-overcast, drizzling day in the off-season as we began our too-short Oakland to Truckee Superliner trip. Almost at once things no longer seemed like the old Amtrak. No sooner had we departed than the dining car steward came on the public address system and in a most professional tone invited passengers to the dining car for the first call for lunch. Two more such calls were made in the course of the leisurely afternoon as we wended our way up the west side of the Sierra.

I had of course ridden in Superliner coaches before, but it was the diner and sleepers that I was most interested in examining. We'd had lunch before the 12:25 Oakland departure, but could not resist the steward's second inviting call to the dining car. We headed back thru the four Superliner coaches; one of which, chokingly full of smoke, was serving as a lounge. The diner proved to be very bright and attractive. There we ran into a pair of RTN reader-contributors who invited us to join them. I ordered a hot turkey sandwich and sat back for a rather long wait for its arrival.

(Right:) The attractive table setting in a new Amtrak Superliner dining car.



(Left:) The kitchen area of a Superliner diner. Photos by Peter Bretz from the recent Family Day exhibit at Los Angeles.

The re-heated frozen sandwich was a disappointment, seeming somewhat artificial and perhaps undercooked. My comment in RTN 212 about the COAST STARLIGHT food is apropos here: "skimpy and not high quality". It struck me as an anomaly that with this million dollar car and all these dining car crew busy at work, the end result was this cheap little "plastic" meal. Somehow the priorities have gotten reversed. The elephant has birthed a mouse.

The riding qualities of this diner left a lot to be desired, even on good SP track. All the Superliner cars on this train, and all I'd ridden in previously rode the same--jarring vertical movements over even small track irregularities. The train consisted of two (conventional) baggage cars, rebuilt Santa Fe car 39904

(continued on page 14)

The Readers Comment

COMMENTS FROM OUR LAST READER TRAIN RATING SURVEY

★ ADIRONDACK: "The lengthy customs stop at Lacolle is a prime cause for this train's poor on-time performance. In former years, agents rode train and inspected en route--a practice that should be resumed. The Rohr trainset exhibited poor maintenance: inoperative reading lights, door controls and toilets, and missing footrests and tray tables in the club section" (J. Michael Morrison, Chicago).

"Snack bar inadequate for 9-hour trip. Customs stops absurdly long and interfere with timekeeping. Needs to be re-routed into Central Station, Montreal" (Duane W. Roller, Waterloo, Ontario).

"Passengers are constantly discouraged from bringing any winter sports equipment aboard this train because no checked baggage is available. Since this train passes near Lake Placid and other Adirondack Mountain resorts, would it not be more practical to use conventional equipment so that checked baggage could be re-instituted?" (Dr. A. H. Toub, Madison, New Jersey).

★ COAST STARLIGHT: "Crew attitude has improved since my last ride. Sleeping car attendant was excellent. Northbound, heat system cooked us in sleeper, and diner had no hot food because of lack of steam" (M. A. Soholt, Central Point, Oregon).

"Northbound, bedroom carpet was totally saturated with water and sloshed as you walked over it. Floor heat would not shut off even tho car porter and I tried manual override. Sweltered at 85°. Heat went off at San Jose and then we froze, as air conditioning had been turned to maximum. Southbound, train was filthy, looked like it hadn't been cleaned in weeks. Windows filthy or Lexan scratched, garbage in corners, thick dust on windowsills. All cars looked this way, and no attempt was made to clean en route. Carpeting was frayed and seat cushions broken down" (Donald R. Dale, El Cajon, California).

"Car cleanliness earns a '4' due to very poor visibility thru "glass", especially forward dome windows" (H. C. Henry, Ontario, California).

"Dining car is in such demand that it's impossible to get a seat--unless you are lucky! Amtrak should ann another diner or use a meal reservation system" (Reader, Sunnyvale, California).

"SP personnel were almost never seen, much less heard. Dining car crew was inattentive, impatient and obviously had little pride in what they were about. Food was poorly prepared" (Jack Barefield, Fort Worth, Texas).

★ LAKE SHORE LIMITED: "If Bo Derek is a 10, then the LAKE SHORE should rate an 11, but 9 is the top of your scale. Phenomenal improvement in performance since introduction of HEP equipment. On-time performance is virtually unbelieveable. Equipment failure has also dropped tremendously. Some changes are needed: There is a need to tighten the schedules; these should be able to approximate those of the old NEW ENGLAND STATES, with departure times about as now but Chicago and Boston arrival times in the vicinity of noon. A full diner is needed on the Boston section. The stations on the route are not bad, except for Pittsfield; why does a city of over 50,000 not have a downtown station and ticket agent?" (Kevin J. Gregoire, Pittsfield, Massachusetts).

"Electrification has produced the greatest value per taxpayer dollar since the Continental Congress paid for Ben Franklin's kite--comfortable, on time, luxurious. Diners are gorgeous examples of a tasteful blend of tradition and contemporary style. Train should operate earlier--afternoon in NY State, arrive early a.m. in Chicago; leave Chicago near midnight, serving the Eastern states at normal people hours" (James E. Dierks, Rochester, New York).

"When Boston section was added in Albany, total consist overloaded the generators and kept blowing the fuse system. We sat in Albany nearly 1hr, 40mins while they kept checking electrical lines, turning power back on, re-blowing fuse system. Finally, they connected engines which came in on Boston section to train (removing engines from New York) and we started right away with no power failure" (Terry Alan Smith, New York, New York).

The Amtrak NORTH COAST HIAWATHA did not appear in this reader survey, as it was discontinued a little over a year ago. In the photo at right, the scenic dome-liner train is heading eastward about two miles west of Whitehall, Montana in the summer of 1979, the last summer of its operation. Photo by Paul Rayton.

"Both long and short periods without power on new equipment at Grand Central, Harmon, Albany and while running. Very dark in slumbercoach to the point of being dangerous. Remodeled slumbercoach very nice, otherwise" (David Hill, San Francisco, California).

★ SOUTHWEST LIMITED: "Three hours late arriving Chicago because we hit a van just east of Newton, Kansas, where I got on. Made up 20mins between Madison and Chicago" (S. C. Condit, Abilene, Kansas).

"Cars were rolling hot boxes--one Hi-level coach must have been in the upper 90s. The last sleeper smelled, and the carpeting was damp. Delayed 2½ hours at Kansas City because of engine trouble; arrived Chicago 2:15 late" (Dan Pilipow, Hammond, Indiana).

"Lounge crew: what crew? One old grouch in the lounge car. Also, lights went out and light sticks, small green tubes, were used to light car. Schedule: good on paper. Two hours late from Chicago to Joliet, and then maintained lateness the whole trip. Eastbound, on time till about Cicero Avenue in Chicago suburbs, then 1-1½ hour delay to Union Station, unexplained. If we had gotten off in Joliet, we could've been home 3 hours earlier!" (Nancy and Ron Sutch, Calumet Park, Illinois).

SUPERLINERS (continued from page 11)

rebuilt into a coach-dorm, Superliner baggage-coach, three coaches, diner, and two sleepers. We felt fortunate to be riding in the Santa Fe Hi-level car, which rode noticeably better than the Pullman-Standard-built Superliners.

RTN reader James Cane happened to be traveling in one of the sleepers today, and he kindly showed us about the sleeping cars, pointing out their features and their faults. It was a pleasant surprise that Amtrak had enough business on this off day to nearly fill both sleepers, so we were hard put to find empty rooms to look at.

The cars were most interesting to examine, and I look forward to riding in them (if I can tolerate their riding qualities). One of their features I like best is the arrangement of windows on both side walls of the rooms so the passenger can view from either side of the train.

The coaches, despite their large windows, possess the same fault as Amfleet cars: viewing forward and to the opposite side of the car is greatly reduced by the poor seat design. The seat backs are too high and the wings are too large, cutting off the vision of those behind and contributing somewhat to seating discomfort. The luggage racks are too wide and too low, giving a confining feeling

The Superliner-equipped SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR arrives at Truckee. Car at left is ex-Santa Fe Hi-level car, slightly shorter than Superliners behind it. Boarding conditions are primitive here. Note the tilted stepbox on the gravel. Alighting requires a long, precision leap. In snow it would be treacherous.

and causing many a bump on the head when the window passenger stands up. The Santa Fe car had neither of these problems, having smaller luggage racks and shorter seat backs. It had no folddown trays at the seats, but I would forego those to gain the greater comfort and visibility of the Hi-levels.

While seasoned rail travelers may note these things as problemmatic, the general public will be delighted with these Superliner cars. And when these cars are finally ready for refurbishing in the future, these interior design quirks could be rather easily corrected. (Another one, incidentally, is the placement of coach night lights, which are in a row down the center of the ceiling, where they shine in the eyes of passengers trying to sleep.)

When the Superliner lounge cars, with their big windows that curve up into the ceiling, finally go into service, they will provide another delight for the traveling public. On this train, the lower level of one coach provided a makeshift bar while the upper level was used for lounge seating, with some of the seats turned around to form groups of four.

Except for a brief bit of sunshine at Davis, the day continued cloudy, and the clouds thickened as we moved into the mountains. At Colfax, where the only Amtrak station is a tiny bus-stop-like shelter seemingly big enough for three people, we saw signs that there had been heavier rains earlier. At about 4:40pm, an hour out of Colfax, we spotted the first snow on the ground. As we moved onward for the next hour we were treated to the sight of delicate snow patterns on trees and shrubs. It was the second snowfall of the season, the first having already melted. In the big valleys between the mountains, little puffs of fog, looking like smoke from a big campfire, floated about among the snow-dusted evergreens. The sight was beautiful, one we would not have missed. A crew member came on the P.A. and pointed out the first sign of snow to the passengers from the Bay Area, to whom the sight of snow is a relative rarity.

We reluctantly took leave of the shiny new train at Truckee, where we arrived at 5:49, just three minutes late (we had been delayed slightly by slow orders on the causeway between Davis and Sacramento, where work on shoring up the supports is underway).

This trip over the "hill" is one of our favorite train rides, and we look forward to the emerging of the San Jose-Reno corridor so that many more people will have the opportunity to ride the rails over this scenic and historic pass.

THE CUYAHOGA'S LAST (?) WEEKEND

by Pete Roehm and Mark Linden

The Cuyahoga Valley Line Railroad has ceased operation for the season once again --and maybe for good. The last weekend, Oct 25-26, was one that a set designer would have developed for the demise of a railroad: rainy, heavy overcast, cold and raw, with even wet snow. Steam engine 4070 failed to show up on Saturday, but did make it for the Sunday final trip. The cars were cold and the passengers wet and not overly cheerful.

The 1981 season is open to speculation; the 1980 season almost did not get going. The Chessie was upping their rent to $5000 per trip, the first increase since the service began five seasons before. The CV is the second longest standard gauge steam run in the country and the only one to connect two major cities--Cleveland and Canton. It winds thru the scenic Cuyahoga Valley Recreation Area and parallels part of the old Ohio-Erie Canal built in 1827. The railroad came in the late 1870s. Passenger service once numbered a dozen trains daily. Today the CV runs (ran) a weekend passenger service in season, and Chessie runs two symbol freights plus two locals and extras if needed.

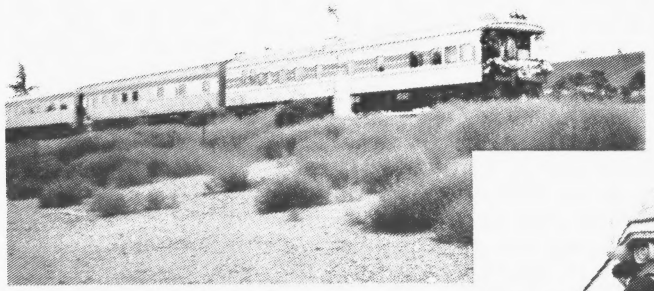
Some 12-15 volunteers man each train. The day we rode it the crew tried, despite cold cars and no 4070, to keep the train lively and interesting. The 4070 had been

rendered inactive thru a broken injector caused when coal was being loaded into the tender.

We remain convinced that despite our less than acceptable trip the CV is indeed worth the ride, and hopefully the river valley will echo to the steam whistle again in 1981 as it has for six years before. In 1979 27,000 rode it, and about 22,000 this year. With luck next year will see it back to higher levels. A letter to the Chessie favoring their continued support of the CV would not hurt one bit.

ANDERSON CAMPAIGN TRAIN RUNS IN CALIFORNIA

by Sylvia Blishak



The whistle-stop special pulls into Palo Alto. Photos by Sylvia Blishak.

Palo Alto CA, Nov 1: Heading north on the southbound tracks, the "John Anderson Whistle-Stop Special" pulled into the station at 12:14pm, 29 minutes behind schedule. Once a regular stop for Southern Pacific's LARK and COAST DAYLIGHT and DEL MONTE, the Palo Alto station now sees only the Caltrans San Francisco to San Jose commuter service trains. Today, 2500 supporters of Presidential candidate John Anderson wait with balloons, bunting, and a live band.

The train crossed over to the eastbound (southbound) track at California Street, and would go back on the westbound (northbound) track just west of San Francisquito Creek in Menlo Park. This maneuver put the candidate closer to the crowds on the station platform, and also gave accompanying press quick access to the station where they would file stories after the speech, and then reboard the train.

Doubleheaded by SP EMD diesels 3201 and 3204 (SDP-45's), the special consist included SP diner 290, lounge 291, former SHASTA DAYLIGHT coach 293, and sleeper 292 which was used as the press car. All cars were silver with the red "Southern Pacific" banner. Bringing up the rear was open-platform business car SP 141, the "Oakland", in Amtrak colors.

The special, conceived by local Anderson supporters, cost about $11,000. It started its run in San Jose and had scheduled stops in Burlingame and San Francisco.

Coming next issue: RTN's big Tenth Anniversary Issue.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

THE HOOSIER STATE, Amtrak's new Chicago-Indianapolis train, is Amtrak's "most phenomenal new train", reports an Amtrak spokesman. Ridership for the first month of operation, October, was 7,174 for an average of 231 per day.....

NEW RAILROAD FILM is being shot by Universal Studios. Titled "Continental Divide", it includes scenes filmed in Chicago, Kalamazoo and Niles, Michigan. The finale of the film was to be shot at Victor, Idaho. Amtrak assembled a consist of conventional cars and a P30 locomotive there for the filming to be done on Dec 1-3. But then a blizzard struck, causing the shooting to be postponed until next May. The movie is scheduled for release in Sep 1981.....

JACKSONVILLE AND MIAMI are to be the locations for more Amtrak "Family Days" to be held in January, exact date unannounced yet. Amtrak said it would probably bring its two LRC trainsets to Florida for exhibit then--both trainsets are now operating in the Northeast Corridor (see Alan Crossley's article, page 8). Amtrak said it has discovered the "secret" of getting big turnouts for its Family Days: work closely with civic leaders in the area beforehand, and they can do a great deal to publicize the events.....

* * *

NINETEEN MORE SUPERLINER cars were received by Amtrak from Pullman-Standard in the week before Thanksgiving. Amtrak has received no Superliner lounge cars yet, tho one has been climate-tested. Three lounges are about ready to ship from the factory, Amtrak said. They won't be shipped, however, until arbitration proceedings are completed. The issue under arbitration is that brought up by Pullman-Standard: was there a valid contract for building the lounge cars under the terms and prices that Amtrak insists there was? Basically, P-S wants more money than was written into the original contract. The matter has been delayed by the difficulty of finding an impartial arbitrator. Amtrak said the sleeping cars and the lounges are the "big holdups" in fully equipping trains with the new cars. The lounges, however, are easier to build than sleepers or diners with all their internal elaboration, and they shouldn't take too long to complete.....

* * *

THE COAST STARLIGHT will have second sections running between Oakland and Los Angeles only on some days during the coming holiday season. The section will run from L.A. to Oakland on Dec 20, 22, 27, 29 and Jan 3. From Oakland to L.A., operation will be on Dec 21, 23, 28, 30 and Jan 4. One set of conventional equipment, without sleeping car service, will make up the extra train, which will probably operate a few minutes behind the regular train, making all stops. The train will be all-reserved, as is the regular STARLIGHT.....

A WASHOUT ON the Burlington Northern north of Vancouver, Washington on Dec 2 disrupted operation of all trains between Seattle and Portland until the track was reopened that night. Train 25, the westbound PIONEER, was terminated at Portland. The southbound MOUNT RAINIER, train 797, was affected. The southbound COAST STARLIGHT was terminated at Tacoma and the northbound was halted at Portland, with passengers bused between the two sets of equipment, with a one-hour delay.....

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED leaving Los Angeles on Nov 26 was found to be blocked by a freight derailment when it reached San Bernardino. A locomotive and 15 cars were derailed at Victorville Narrows, blocking both main tracks. The SOUTHWEST performed an unusual detour by backing up from San Bernardino to Colton and heading over Cajon Pass on SP's Palmdale-Colton cutoff line, using that track to Palmdale and Mojave. At Mojave the train headed east on Santa Fe's Valley Division

to Barstow and its normal route to Chicago. This is believed to be only the second Amtrak train to use the Palmdale-Colton cutoff on a detour. At Mojave there is no wye, so presumably the engines were run around the passenger cars, and the cars had to operate backwards between Mojave and Barstow. The train fell about 4hrs behind schedule. The derailment was cleaned up quickly, and the westbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED did not have to make the detour.....

SAN DIEGAN ROUTE was blocked by a derailment of nine Santa Fe freight cars at Santa Ana on Nov 24. The following day, buses ferried passengers between Los Angeles, Fullerton and Santa Ana to Irvine (milepost 178), where the passengers were transferred to a SAN DIEGAN train that took them to San Diego. This procedure was reversed northbound. Amtrak used the SAN DIEGAN equipment that sits overnight in San Diego to do this. At Irvine, the train was turned on the Tustin wye. Operations were back to normal on Nov 26.....

CHANGEOVER TO ELECTRICITY for hotel power on Amtrak trains, now getting close to completion, means the end of steam gushing out of passenger cars at stations. The makers of the Mr. Coffee TV commercial apparently don't know this, for the commercial now being shown in some places shows an attractive young woman bearing a gaily wrapped Mr. Coffee machine stepping off an Amfleet train into the arms of Mom and Dad--and into huge swirls of steam! Quips reader Al Crossley, must be that the STARLIGHT is loading on the next track. Incidentally, the STARLIGHT is to be re-equipped with Superliner cars sometime after mid-January.....

★ ★ ★

THE TRAVEL BARGAIN of 1980-81, reports reader Tom Higgins, must be the APEX (Advance Purchase Excursion Fares) plan of VIA Rail Canada. Mr. Higgins will be making a transcontinental roundtrip in February, taking the CP route west and the CN route back, in a roomette, all for about $260 ($311 Canadian funds). The APEX plan is described on page 7 of the current (Sep 29) VIA system timetable, and it allows 40% off coach and sleeper accommodations in the off-season provided certain conditions are fulfilled. Mr. Higgins figures that a similar trip on Amtrak would cost between $600 and $700 with an excursion fare, using a Superliner economy room in place of a roomette. The U.S. coast-to-coast roundtrip excursion fare in roomette would be about $728.50, while in slumbercoach and a Superliner economy room it would cost $594.00.....

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers Executive Committee was having a meeting in Washington DC Dec 3 and 4.....

★ ★ ★

THE MONTREALER HAD a standing room only load going north on the day before Thanksgiving, with a 10-passenger-car consist. But reports say that the recent changes in time with earlier northbound times at Vermont points have reduced there from 150-250 down to 25-75.....

RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR connections eastbound from the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and the PIONEER at Ogden have been broken with the recent Oct 26 schedule changes on the Amtrak system. The Rio Grande van from Ogden to its train leaves at 6:30am, but the PIONEER reaches Ogden 10 minutes later, and the SF ZEPHYR gets in just as the van is departing!.....

A BIG SNOWSTORM hit Texas the weekend of Nov 15, moving on eastward and creating havoc up to the New England states a few days later. Pennsylvania had its third worst November snowstorm in history. Snow and high winds again hit New England and the Eastern Great Lakes region on Dec 3. No rail travel disasters were reported in this time. An Amtrak spokesman said that the INTER-AMERICAN was delayed when Arkansas had some unusual snow, and snow in New Mexico gave the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED some delays of about 45 minutes.....

TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL is expected to be passed by the lame-duck Congress before it adjourns. The bill provides $22 billion for the Dept. of Transportation for the next ten years. An important provision of the legislation is

that transit systems are exempted from modifying all their equipment to accommodate handicapped travelers, but may seek cheaper solutions such as dispatching special vans for them instead of making all buses accessible to the handicapped.....

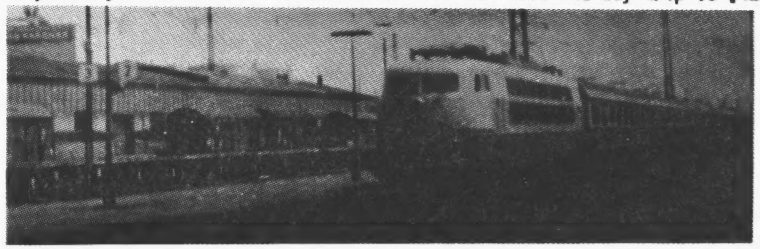
THE NEW MUSICAL, "Frimbo", reviewed in our last issue, unfortunately closed after a very short run and reviews that were not too favorable.....

OCTOBER ON-TIME PERFORMANCE was better than September's, Amtrak said. The figures, along with October ridership, are not yet available.....

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR BROWN on Nov 18 announced plans to begin a $300,000 9-month study of the feasibility of high-speed bullet train-type passenger service in his state. Three routes are being considered: San Diego-L.A., L.A.-Oakland/San Francisco, and Oakland-Sacramento.....

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN and the Frisco line (St. Louis-San Francisco Railway) are being allowed to merge, by Supreme Court decision handed down Nov 25. The combined railroad is composed of 29,200 miles of track in 25 states, and extends from the Pacific Northwest to Florida, and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, making it the longest rail system in the U.S.....

A SPECIAL TRAIN will be run by Amtrak during the holiday period for military personnel, tho civilians can ride it if space is available. It runs from Ft. Leonard Wood MO via Bundy Junction to St. Louis on the Frisco line, then to New York via the former NATIONAL LIMITED route. The train makes that run on Dec 19, leaving Ft. Leonard Wood at 8am and reaching New York at 3:35pm the next day. On Jan 3 the train travels westbound, leaving New York's Penn Station at 3:15pm and arriving at Ft. Leonard Wood the following day at 9:05pm. Besides the places mentioned above, the Amfleet train will stop at Effingham, Terre Haute, Indianapolis, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Altoona, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Trenton, and Newark, as well as the stations served by the PENNSYLVANIAN. While the eastbound run is expected to be full, the westbound run may be ridden by contacting Ron Goldfeder, Bldg 406, Box 437, Ft. Myer VA 22211. Estimated fare for the full one-way trip is $120.....



LETTER WRITER KESSEL says (page 3) that Continental trains are better than British ones. And a Canadian reader whose name unfortunately became separated from his correspondence sent us the above photo of a West German IC (Intercity) train taken at Bingen in the Rhine Valley. He says the train, which is now both first and second class, runs at 160-200 km/h without vibration. This is a typical IC hourly express, and is electric-powered.....

THE COLLISION BETWEEN Amtrak train 74, the eastbound EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, and Conrail freight OPSE-7 on Nov 7 (reported last issue) apparently will result in the scrapping of the 5-unit Turboliner set that was involved. The set is stored at Rensselaer for insurance company inspection, but reports are that all the cars have cracked frames and will have to be sent to the scrappers.....

HAROLD D. KEANE, 47, who was fired by Amtrak in Jan 1979 has been ordered reinstated and given $202,000 in settlement by a federal court decision in Washington. Keane argued that he had been fired due to age discrimination.....

AMTRAK FL9 engines will power all trains out of Grand Central as far as Albany-Rensselaer starting in February, when all six of the combined diesel-electric locomotives will be available. No more power changes at Harmon NY will be made. West of Albany an F40 diesel takes over on non-Turboliner equipment.....

THE "BIG STEAMUP" of 1981 is coming to Sacramento CA on May 9, when a number of famous existing steam locomotives are expected to be on hand for the dedication of the State Railroad Museum. At the moment, expected are the 4449, 8444, Royal Hudson and the UP 3985. The 4449 may be painted in SP Daylight colors.....

SLIP OF THE MONTH in RTN 212 was our slip and not the Chicago Sun-Times': The Budd Company really is German-owned, having been owned by Thyssen AG, the West German steel company since Apr 1978.....

STATE OF MICHIGAN has established a new Commission to save the car ferry service on Lake Michigan.....

BLUE WATER LIMITED ran at least once with Amfleet cars in October, but normally it is a Turboliner train. No Superliners have been reported on this run.....

THE UNION PACIFIC has retired all but one of its E unit diesels. Engine 951 has been placed in the Cheyenne roundhouse for preservation.....

IF YOU RENEWED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION recently and are still getting a renewal reminder with this issue, do not be alarmed. Due to employee absence in our subscription fulfillment department, we are obliged temporarily to take shortcuts to prevent delays to RTN. Everyone who has paid will be getting this issue, but label information will be a little slower in being updated. When you change your address or write concerning your subscription, please include label code numbers. Thank you.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"It's probably not fair to make fun of Jerry Brown and his futuristic ideas... But recently the governor, in proposing a high-speed train system modelled after the Japanese bullet-trains, claimed so many benefits that we started to wonder if the governor hadn't become a little rail happy... We don't doubt for a minute that trains are a possible alternative to our four-wheeled gas-guzzlers. Our problem is more mundane: the Democratic governor, in announcing the new program, forgot to say where the trains would go and who would pay for them."

--Los Angeles Herald-Examiner editorial, Nov 20.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"...The truck driver, Benoit Senecal, walked away from the accident with a few bruises and minor cuts after his truck hit the rear section of the second engine, then spun around and hit the baggage car. The entire front section of his truck was ripped apart by the impact which derailed eight of the 11 sleeping cars."

--Montreal Gazette, Aug 26.

(That MONTREALER gets a lot of first class patronage.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. To be sure of entry in time, send full info at least 4 weeks before event. Be sure to address letter as follows:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Feb 13-18, 1981: Carlsbad Holiday--tour of Carlsbad Caverns, Davis Mts. State Park, etc. from Los Angeles; 2 nights on SUNSET LIMITED. $379 & up. $75 deposit. Pacific RR Society Inc., PO Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. (714) 684-7458.

Dec 31: New Year's Cruise, San Francisco-Sacramento CA via S.F. Bay, Sacramento River & Delta. Bus return to SF. $30. Optional overnite in Sacto $90/person. Delta Travel, PO Box 813, 1540 W. Capitol, W. Sacramento CA 95691. 916-372-3690.

CARS & CONSISTS

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose Nov 20: engines 642, 538 (SDPs); cars domes 9478 & 9353 deadheads, 1087, 1552, dome 9473, 4491, dome 9485, 4522, 4483, 4488, dome 9350, 8041, 2652 "Silver Butte", 2672 "Silver Hollow", deadheads 8096 & 2802 "Halifax County".

*MONTREALER, train 61, White River Jct Nov 27: engines CN 3106, Atk 309 & 497; cars 1454, 2990 "Joseph V. McDonald", 2084 slumbercoach, 20210 Amdinette, 28305, 21818, 21819, 21809, 21034, 21157, 21076.

*ST. LOUIS MULE, train 342, Kansas City Nov 2: engine 342 (F40); 20129, 21208.

(The following consists were all recorded by Bill Matusinec at Chicago on Nov 26, the busy day before Thanksgiving:)

*INTER-AMERICAN, train 22: engines 298, 301; cars 1152, 2885, 20203 Amdinette, 21875, 20029 Amcafe, 21870, 21802, 21118.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 48: engines 346, 340; cars 1614, 2053, 2442, 4000, 4606, 4603, 3105, 8509, 4605, 4649, 4607, 4612, 4602, 2441, 1162 (last 5 cars for Boston).

*BLUE WATER LIMITED, train 364: Turboclub 64, dinette 81, coaches 80, 82, 85, Turbocoach 59 (unusual 6-unit Turboliner consist).

*TWILIGHT LIMITED, train 354: engines 264, 260; cars 1365, 21257, 21059, 21856, 21058, 2000, 21201, 21193, 21200, Amclub 20203.

*HOOSIER STATE, train 318: engine 304; cars 21241, 21063, 21209, 20034 Amcafe, 21120.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4: engines 500, 508, 573; cars 1253, 1224, 1523, 2251 "Star Crest", 2758 "Palm Stream", 2760 "Palm Top", 8025, 9918, 9973, 9934, 9951, 9961.

*ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347: engines 513, 514; cars five Hi-level coaches, Hi-level diner, two Hi-level coaches (numbers unknown).

Ted and Sylvia Blishak, owners of Accent on Travel, are frequent RTN contributors.
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TROLLEY TRAILS THROUGH THE WEST: Vol. 7 - Northern California and Vol. 8 - Southern California $4.00 each. Back issues: Vol. 1-Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane, 5-Montana/Utah, 6-Western Canada $3.00 each. All moneyback guarantee. Wilson Bros Publishers, Box 712rtn, Yakima WA 98907.

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WEST TEXAS: I need to obtain information about the present condition and traffic density on the Dallas-Sierra Blanca (El Paso) line. If willing to assist, please contact Alfred E. Ehm, 170 Carousel Drive, San Antonio, TX 78227.

TRAIN TRAVELLER'S ASSOCIATION, (Transport 2000 in Australia), has quarterly newsletter, 20pp, in RTN-type format. Lots of clear text, graphs, photos. Subscription, A$3.00 p.a.; membership A$10.00, to G.P.O. Box 2518, Melbourne 3001 Austral.

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FOR SALE: 1961 Official RR Guide $20 pp. Also AHM HO train: BN 7 passenger cars & powered E-9 A unit. No track/transformer. $55 pp. D. Wiles,Bx 45 Sanders AZ 86512.

ATLANTIC COAST LINE station and headquarters buildings, Wilmington, NC pictures wanted, color or black & white, from streetside or 3rd street bridge.
Adron Hall, 2411 Shadyside Lane, Picayune, Mississippi 39466.

WANTED FOR RAILROAD MUSEUM: Railroad lanterns (especially Ann Arbor, DT&I, GR&I, DUR, CAN. SOU.), switch keys, locks, ticket cabinets, station signs, hat badges, timetables, railway express items. Ken Schramm, 19129 Cheshire, Detroit MI 48236

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Rate The Trains

You can submit your ratings now on regularly-scheduled North American passenger trains (not commuter) that you have personally ridden recently. Give the date or approximate date of each trip so we can place ratings in the proper survey.

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) listed below: (A) Your overall impression of the train, taking everything into account; (B) Service from operating crew (conductor, etc.); (C) Dining or snack crew service; (D) Lounge crew service; (E) Food quality; (F) Car mechanical condition; (G) Car cleanliness and housekeeping; (H) Condition of track & roadbed; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Condition of stations: (K) Appropriateness of type of equipment used.

Use the 9-point rating scale below. Do not use previous rating forms, as we have changed some of the categories. Put ratings on separate sheet from other correspondence.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9

Extremely poor — Average, acceptable — Extremely good

RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

NAME & ADDRESS:
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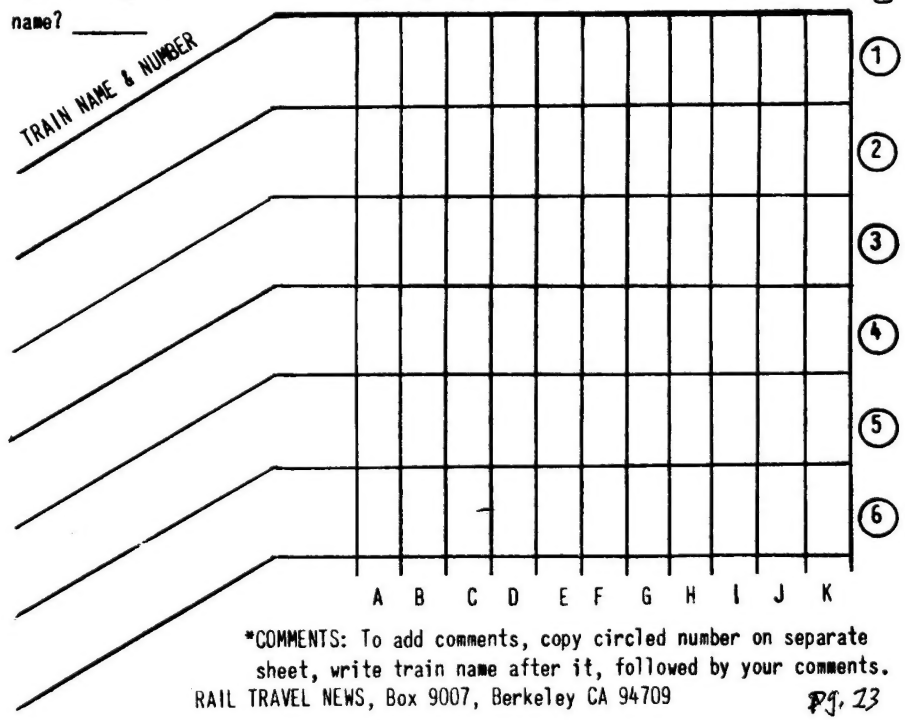
.....
.....

Can we use your name? _____



*COMMENTS: To add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

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